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RHFMISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MOPS](#) [EWWT](#) [ZR](#) [SO](#) [XA](#)
SUBJECT: RFG: U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATO COUNTER-PIRACY
EFFORTS

Classified By: Ambassador Ivo Daalder. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C/NF) This is a request for guidance. See para 6.

¶2. (C/NF) SUMMARY: While the U.S. has been pressing hard for a long-term NATO role in counter-piracy, we have thus far been unable to answer Allied questions about what the U.S. commitment/contribution to such a mission would be. Without a clear U.S. commitment, a NATO mission can not succeed. We request Washington guidance on this issue, including more clarity on what a U.S. contribution might be, in time for a May 22 force sensing conference. END SUMMARY

Pushing a NATO Mission...

¶3. (C/NF) At a policy level, the United States has been pressing hard for a long-term NATO role in international counter-piracy efforts. On May 13, for example, the Department issued a fact sheet which stated that "we actively support the expansion of NATO and European Union counter piracy missions." Indeed, the U.S. has even suggested that counter-piracy might be an area for practical NATO-Russia cooperation, once military-to-military engagement is re-established within the framework of the NATO-Russia Council.

Requires a U.S. Commitment...

¶4. (C/NF) While most Allies have seemed willing to agree to the establishment of a long-term NATO counter-piracy effort, many of European Allies have also asked what "value-added" a NATO mission would bring when compared to the EU's Atalanta counter-piracy mission. This is their coded way of asking what the U.S. would bring to the table, especially since many of them have also made clear that their first priority would be force generation for the EU mission. Belgium and Portugal, among others, have openly stated that force generation for a NATO mission should not come at the expense of the EU mission. Since NATO is an Alliance tying together the U.S. and Canada with Europe, a NATO operation--almost by definition--can not succeed without a clear U.S. contribution. We can use a U.S. contribution to leverage European contributions for such a mission. Europeans will have little appetite, however, for a NATO mission that the U.S. pushes for, but is unwilling to contribute to.

Time is Running Out

¶ 15. (C/NF) Our ability to avoid this apparent disconnect is quickly disappearing. On Friday, May 22, NATO will host a force sensing conference. While perhaps less formal than an official force generation conference, this conference will nevertheless be critical to our efforts to move forward with a NATO mission. If the U.S. representative is not able to put forward a coherent U.S. position, including a "sense" of what an eventual U.S. contribution to the mission might be, Allies will likely ask very pointed questions about why we are pushing so hard for a mission that the U.S., in the end, does seem willing to commit to join.

¶ 16. (C/NF) Request for Guidance: We request Washington guidance on this issue NLT than COB Washington time on Thursday, May 21, including information which could be used during the May 22 conference to give Allies a clear "sense" of what a U.S. contribution to a NATO counter-piracy mission might entail. At the very least, the U.S. should be in a position to make clear that it has an intent to contribute.
DAALDER